

8. PLACE NAMES AND **STORIES**

names in the Karnataka are often interesting.

Some of them show a keen poetic sense; others are based on legends; round others, like *\$agutw_r* peculiar to the Malnad, popular fancy has woven stories; and all such names are reminiscent of a culture that has grown through the centuries and brooded over generations of men.

The jasmine is perhaps the favourite flower of the Kannada people. It will have been noticed that it recurs frequently in folk-song and also that jasmine-white is a phrase used in describing Siva. The flower is found associated with many villages all over the country; one village is the village of jasmine; another the double jasmine; another the jasmine blossom. The Kannada name of the flower *Mollige* has a soft and liquid sound*. This also must have weighed with the persons coining the names for their villages. The name combinations are soft and pleasant to the ear. The *Champaka* occurs in several names. *Champaka* wood is a common name in the hill country and simply Champak is found in the plains. The lotus similarly appears in many names, "Lotus Tank", "Lotus Pond". In other names, the word *Siri* or *Amruta* occurs. *Siri* is wealth or prosperity, and *Amruta* is nectar. We have the courtyard of wealth, the prosperous one, the abode of wealth; the town of nectar and the village of

nectar. Other
names show even greater poetic sense: the
dweller on
the peak, the mellifluous note or the
fragrant wood, the
lane of pearl. *Banavasi*, "the dweller in
the wood", is